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513 By eight o'clock most of the people have already retired. The bigger
[883] boys, now lustily singing a song, stay up latest; but soon all is quiet. On moonlight nights, however, the boys and girls dance and play in the *khoro* or outside the village until a late hour. Similarly, if there is beer in
[786] the village, there will be noise well into the night and very often quarrels and fights as well. When the spirit of a possessed woman comes upon her, there may be drumming and singing for her to dance to all night; then no one gets much sleep.

252 You yourself retire into the hut set aside for you, your mind full of the new impressions received during the day. How long you have been asleep you do not know, but suddenly you are aware of a dull, thudding noise. Can it be a drum in the distance? No. It is too regular. Again you hear thud, thud, thud. You look at the time. It is 2 a.m. You try to go to sleep; but the unknown beat is too disturbing, so you go outside to investigate. Some shadowy figures are moving at one end of the village. Women stamping! It is the women you watched in the morning, finishing the last process in their stamping. You wonder how they can see; but the night is, after all, not so dark and the meal is very white. Moreover, soon the moon will be up. The meal is stamped, then, by means of a circular movement of a flat basket, the finer grains are separated from the coarser again and again till the flour is fine enough to pass through the fine mesh of a European sieve, though in a few kraals one still finds even the last process being done by means of a basket. Later, when the sun becomes hot, the meal will be spread out to dry on mats or rocks, if any are conveniently near, or in baskets. If the women finish their stamping before dawn, they may go back to bed, as you have decided to do.

805 Such is the everyday life in a Lovedu village. There are, however,
241 important differences from one season to another, for Lovedu life is in
221 much closer harmony with nature than ours. The Native himself divides the seasons into three: *khilemo*, the time of hoeing, which is reckoned from about September to January; *letavula*, or summer, from about February to the end of May, the time when foods are plentiful; and *maria*, or winter, from June to the end of August. With the introduction of the plough, the planting season has been curtailed and the season of reaping prolonged. Whereas in the old days hoeing and the planting of advance crops in wet places began as early as September, to-day, even if the rains come early, nothing is done until November, more particularly because crops planted earlier are more prone to be attacked by the stalkborer. Consequently we shall consider November as the opening of the seasonal calendar. It must, however, be remembered that division of the year into seasonal activities is somewhat artificial, for activities overlap and life is never directed to one single object. Individuals often pursue their own ends, despite the general activities prevailing, and at all times there is great diversity.

241 During the ploughing and planting season, November to February,
221 there are not many people, other than children and the aged, to be found in the villages. Workers set out early to begin work in the fields, their

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In the Lovedu configuration of values, moderation is allied to toleration of differences. The Lovedu do not attach much importance to precision and punctuality, rigid procedures and meticulous fulfilment of promises. Time is not valued and the word for slowness or absence of hurry is the same as that for goodness or moral virtue (*vuya*); the only way to ask a man to go slowly is to ask him to go in a good manner (*ga vuya*). Time is not the first consideration, for most actions can, within certain limits, be performed to-morrow as well as to-day. 'The far-off well causes thirst', they say, implying that one should drink [beer] where one can and not rigidly pursue some distant goal; the saying is an appraisal of opportunism as against inflexible purposes. Interest very rarely centres in exact forms, word-perfect formulas, or the precise execution of a rite. Prayers and spells are extempore, communications with the ancestors are often disturbed by gossip and intrusions, and consultation of a doctor about questions of life and death may be interrupted by all manner of irrelevancies. In the *khɔrɔ* the procedure does not rely upon set forms; there is toleration even of the differences of customs and laws in the districts; and great deviations from the norm are possible if people agree. An actual performance of a rite differs widely from the ideal description given by an informant. The important thing is always the broad pattern, the underlying spirit, not the exact form, the letter of the law; and magical power is hardly ever derived from a precise unfolding of a rite or adherence to meticulous details. The most highly formalized aspect of the culture is the *digɔma* complex, where we seem to see the remnants of a highly ceremonious outlook upon life, which was characterized by secret societies, masked gods, and symbolic objects, and by esoteric mysteries enmeshed in fixed forms and calendric observances. The obscure symbolism of the drum cult is inscrutable, but its dramatic interest keeps it alive, even if the power of its mysteries and mummeries appears to challenge the prerogatives of the queen.

Toleration of variations is necessary among the Lovedu to effect the incorporation and willing co-operation of so many divergent elements, especially in view of the fact that the ruling group has neither the means nor the inclination to impose its will by force; it is also implied in the autonomy of the districts and necessitates the elaboration of the links which overcome the weaknesses of decentralization. Variability adds to the scope of individual expression, permitting of the realization of very different temperaments and avoiding the dangers of repression. This is so because individuality will have, within the limits of the pattern, great play, not only in specific situations, such as rites and ceremonies in which the forms are not rigid, the roles of persons not fixed, and the precedences and procedures not invariable, but also in whole societies in which wide expanses of culture are not externalized in conventions or ceremonial. This is true of specific Lovedu rites, ceremonies, and institutions, as well as of Lovedu culture as a whole. Another aspect of the idea that man has many potentialities and many ways of realizing them is expressed in the saying, 'Man is an elephant; he does not eat one [kind of] plant only'—that is, he should try many things.

The socially stressed Lovedu values and the social arrangements are,